



# News Release

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## **Radioactive material in the state air from Japan nuclear reactors way down**

*Radioactive iodine often dropping below detection limit of standard testing*

**OLYMPIA** — Levels of radioactive material from Japan's nuclear reactors detected in Washington air continue to drop, often below detection limits. So, the state Department of Health has changed the additional air monitoring schedule to once per week instead of daily.

All detections of radioactive material from Japan in our state have been far below any level of health concern. Levels are now so low that standard testing methods often don't detect it at all so the health department has decided to run fewer tests. State health officials began testing air in the Seattle area for radioactive iodine, I-131, shortly after the nuclear reactors in Fukushima were damaged in mid-March. The state's tests are in addition to daily federal air monitoring in Washington, which will continue.

The federal monitoring system called RadNet also tests rainwater, and the state health department has been supplementing that work by collecting its own rainwater samples. Radioactive iodine in Washington rainwater has also been found at very low levels and the state will end additional rainwater testing, too.

While environmental detections in our state are dwindling, some contamination has been detected on cargo containers shipped here from the affected area of Japan. The levels are not a human health concern, and the containers were decontaminated as needed. Department of Health Radiation Protection staff has worked closely with licensees and owners to assure the cargo is properly handled and managed.

Additional testing will resume in our state if any routine environmental monitoring or new events in Japan indicate it's needed. Agency radiation protection and lab staff have been closely

Low levels of radiation in WA from Japan way down

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analyzing test results, and confirm there have been no environmental detections even remotely close to a health concern.

[The Department of Health website features](#) a section about what the nuclear reactor situation in Japan means for our state.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health website at <a href="http://www.doh.wa.gov">http://www.doh.wa.gov</a> for <i>a healthy dose of information</i> .
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